

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

Claims 1-22 have been amended as follows: Underlines indicate insertions and ~~strikeouts~~ indicate deletions.

1. (Original) A method for increasing the chrome to iron ratio of a chromite product selected from the group consisting of ore and ore concentrate comprising the steps of

a. mixing the chromite product with at least one salt so as to produce a mixture, whereby the concentration of salt in the mixture is selected to induce the selective chlorination of iron; and

b. chlorinating the mixture in the presence of CO at a temperature sufficient to induce the formation of a thin film of a melt around the chromite product and at a temperature able to promote the selective chlorination of iron,

whereby an iron impoverished chromite product is yielded having an increased chromite to iron ratio as compared to that of the chromite product.

2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said temperature is between about 157° and about 750°C.

3. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the at least one salt is selected from the group consisting of NaCl, KCl and MgCl₂ and a combination thereof.

4. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~and~~ 2, wherein the salt is NaCl and forms about 5% to about 10% w/w of the mixture.

5. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~and~~ 2, wherein the salt is NaCl and forms about 5% w/w of the mixture.

6. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 3, wherein the temperature is between about 250° and about 720°C.

7. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 4, wherein the temperature is between about 670° and about 720°C.

8. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 7, wherein the Cl₂/CO ratio is between about 0.5 and about 1.5.

9. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 8, wherein the mixture is dried before chlorination.

10. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 9, wherein N₂ is used as a carrier gas during chlorination.

11. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 10, wherein the duration of the chlorination is about 30 minutes to about 2 hours.

12. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one of~~ claims 1 ~~to~~ 10, wherein the duration of the chlorination is about 2 hours.

13. (Original) A method for increasing the chrome to iron ratio of a chromite product selected from the group consisting of ore and ore concentrate comprising the steps of

a. mixing the chromite product with NaCl so that a mixture is produced having about 5% to about 10% NaCl w/w; and

b. chlorinating the mixture in the presence of CO at a temperature sufficient to induce the formation of a thin film of a melt around the chromite product and at a temperature able to promote the selective chlorination of iron,

whereby an iron impoverished chromite product is yielded having an increased chromite to iron ratio as compared to that of the chromite product.

14. (Original) A method as recited in claim 13, wherein said temperature is between about 157° and about 750°C.

15. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~and 14~~, wherein the salt is NaCl and forms about 5% w/w of the mixture.

16. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~to 15~~, wherein the temperature is between about 670° and about 720°C.

17. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~to 16~~, wherein the Cl₂/CO ratio is about 0.5 and about 1.5.

18. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~to 17~~, wherein the mixture is dried before chlorination.

19. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~to 18~~, wherein N₂ is used as a carrier gas during chlorination.

20. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~to 19~~, wherein the duration of the chlorination is about 30 minutes to about 2 hours.

21. (Currently amended) A method as recited in ~~any one~~ of claims 13 ~~to 20~~, wherein the duration of the chlorination is about 2 hours.

22. (Original) A method for extracting iron from a chromite product selected from the group consisting of ore and ore concentrate comprising the steps of

- a. mixing the chromite product with at least one salt; and
 - b. chlorinating the mixture in the presence of CO at a temperature sufficient to induce the formation of a thin film of a melt around the chromite product so as to promote the chlorination of iron,
- whereby an iron impoverished chromite product is yielded.